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UNCLASSIFIED--PRC CITY BRIEF
WU-HAN

CIA JUL75

01 OF 01

CIA/OGCR /PN 61.2684/75

ITEM 005

PRC CITY BRIEF

Wu-han 武漢



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CIA/OGCR/GD
PN 61.2684/75
July 1975

WU-HAN (Wuhan)
(pronounced wu han)

Chinese romanized system
of spelling:

Wuhan

Meaning in Chinese:

contraction of three city names:

Wu-ch'ang (prosperous military)
Han-k'ou (mouth of Han River)
Han-yang (sun side of Han River)

Location:

30°34'N 114°13'E
(approx. latitude of
Baton Rouge, Louisiana)

Elevation:

75 feet above sea level

Population:

2,500,000 in municipality,
estimated; 1,900,000 in built-
up area, estimated (total
municipality comprises 700 square
miles, estimated; includes rural
areas)

Climate:

	<u>Jan</u>	<u>April</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>Oct</u>
Mean daily maximum temperature (°F)	46	69	93	74
Mean daily minimum temperature (°F)	34	55	78	60
Mean number of days with precipitation	7	12	9	8
Mean monthly precipitation (inches)	1.8	5.8	7.0	3.1

Mean daily maximum
temperature (°F)

46 69 93 74

Mean daily minimum
temperature (°F)

34 55 78 60

Mean number of days
with precipitation

7 12 9 8

Mean monthly
precipitation (inches)

1.8 5.8 7.0 3.1

WU-HAN

General

Wu-han, capital of Hupeh Province, is the collective name given to the conurbation of Wu-ch'ang, Han-k'ou (Hankow), and Han-yang. Located at the confluence of the Han and Yangtze Rivers, this urban complex of approximately 2.5 million people comprises the foremost city in the densely populated, agriculturally productive, and industrially developing middle Yangtze Plain. Wu-han is also the most important transportation center in Central China: it is the largest port on the Yangtze after Shanghai and is capable of handling ocean-going vessels of 8,000 tons; it is also a key rail center on the Peking-Canton Railway. The double-decked Yangtze rail and road bridge opened in 1957 is one of only two bridges across the river between Ch'ung-ch'ing (Chungking), in southwest China, and the sea.

The Wu-han cities are physically separated by the rivers: Han-k'ou and Han-yang are located on the left bank of the Yangtze and north and south of the Han Shui, respectively; Wu-ch'ang lies on the right bank of the Yangtze. Each city is situated on low, flat land; ponds, lakes, canals, and other water features are commonplace. Yangtze floods are an annual threat, but dikes protect the urban centers, particularly Han-k'ou, which is the most vulnerable of the three cities to flooding damage. The cities have developed more or less independently and with distinctive functions that still characterize each of the three today. Nevertheless, their administrative amalgamation shortly after the Communist takeover and the construction of the road and rail bridge across the Yangtze have served as powerful stimuli to integration of the tri-cities.

Wu-han's latitude, low elevation, and location near the south-east edge of the Asian continent result in a subtropical climate similar to that along the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico. Late spring and early summer weather in particular is cloudy, rainy, and very warm to hot. By early or mid-July, rain becomes less frequent and cloudy days are fewer; daily temperatures, however, climb and throughout July and Most of August rise almost daily to 90°F and above (occasionally to 100°F) and at nightfall only to the upper 70's. The autumn months are the most desirable from the standpoint of comfort -- temperatures are lower, there is little rain, and clear days are frequent. Winters are chilly

with little precipitation, although a few light snowfalls are to be expected during January and February.

Han-k'ou

Han-k'ou, the largest and most Westernized of the Wu-han cities, functions as the commercial center for the metropolitan area. Although always more business-oriented than its two sister cities, Han-k'ou's dominant economic position was not firmly established until after 1860, the year it was designated a treaty port. With the establishment of foreign concessions the city's commercial functions mushroomed, and it quickly developed into one of China's most important inland ports. Keeping pace with its rising business importance, the city's population and boundaries grew rapidly. Today it is the most modern of the Wu-han cities, with many of the buildings dating from only about 1900.

The newest section of the city lies north and west of the main rail line that traverses nearly the entire length of town. Developed largely since 1949, it is generally a very pleasant section of town and could serve as a showcase for Chinese urban planning. Except for an older area near the town's northern railyards, it is well-designed and landscaped with parks, lakes, and tree-lined streets. The vast majority of buildings are either modern workers apartments or government offices. Between the rail line and Chung-shan-ta-tao, the city's main thoroughfare, tree-lined streets become less common, parks and open spaces rarer, and the buildings -- mainly a mix of workers apartments, medium-size factories, and small workshops -- somewhat older and not so widely spaced. This area, despite the expansion of modern industry on the outskirts of the city, still accounts for a significant share of all goods manufactured in Wu-han. Because of the considerable growth of Han-k'ou since the late 1800s, the old Chinese part of town has shrunk in size relative to the rest of the city. Much of it stretches along the Han Shui south of Chung-shan-ta-tao.

The city's past connections with the West are still evident in the area that was given over to foreign concessions along Yen-chiang-ta-tao, a major thoroughfare paralleling the Yangtze River. At its peak this concession area -- which is sometimes referred to as Han-k'ou's Bund -- occupied nearly 2 miles of valuable river-front property. Many of the multistory Western-style banks, stores, and residences still stand but, for the most part, are now occupied by government offices.

Since 1949 Han-k'ou has broadened its industrial base considerably, as have most large Chinese cities. Commerce and trade continue to be as important as before, and new factories producing farm equipment, textiles, chemicals, and food products have been built, most of them along the Han Shui, west of the city.

Han-k'ou is also the primary military center for Wu-han Municipality. An airfield and several large military-related installations -- barracks, schools, and training areas -- occupy extensive tracts of once productive cropland on the city's margins.

Han-yang

Han-yang is the smallest of the three cities. It was founded about A.D. 600 but, like neighboring Han-k'ou, remained relatively unimportant until the last half of the 19th century. It was not the establishment of foreign concessions within the city, however, that brought it prominence. Rather Han-yang became important as the site of one of China's most successful tries at "self-strengthening," a short-lived attempt during the 1890s and early 1900s by various regional Chinese leaders to develop Western-style institutions in order to defend China against foreign domination. In 1891 Chang Chih-tung, Viceroy (governor-general) for Hupeh Province, convinced of China's need to modernize, constructed the Han-yang iron and steel plant. Located north of Kuei Shan (Tortoise Hill) along the Han Shui, it was China's first modern iron and steel complex. By the early 1900s an arsenal and several other factories had been built along this riverfront, and for a short time Han-yang ranked as one of China's most important centers of heavy industry, particularly iron and steel products. Han-yang's status was also enhanced by the Self-Strengthening School, an institute opened by Chang in 1893 that stressed Western languages and commercial affairs.

Unfortunately, the city's progress was brought to an end by the world financial problems of the 1930s and by the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937. By the close of World War II most of the plants had either been destroyed or moved farther inland. Since 1949 the southern bank of the Han Shui has been re-established as an industrial district, but the emphasis has shifted to such light industries as food processing, cotton textiles, and paper products.

Han-yang is a typical old Chinese city -- densely populated, once-walled, carved into irregular-shaped sections by narrow winding streets, and given over almost entirely to residences

and commerce. Only along Yang-ta-tao the city's main street, are modern structures commonplace -- primarily workers apartments and government buildings. This part of Han-yang lies south of the re-established industrial district and is separated from it by Kuei Shan.

Prior to Han-yang's rapid industrial growth around the turn of this century the town was favored as a retirement spot by local officials and gentry, and many large, comfortable retirement houses were built. Several still exist, primarily around the shores of Lien-hua Hu (Lotus Lake), a small and shallow but picturesque body of water located in the northeast of the city adjacent to the Yangtze.

A new industrial district for storage and light fabrication is now being developed south of the town on agricultural land fronting the Yangtze. With industrial facilities lining both the Han and Yangtze, and a railroad-tie plant on the western edge of the city, Han-yang has regained some of the industrial importance it possessed early in this century.

Wu-ch'ang

Wu-ch'ang is the oldest of the Wu-han cities and has long functioned as an important administrative center. As early as 1300, during the Yuan (Mongol) Dynasty, Wu-ch'ang served as the capital of a large administrative area known as Hu-kwang, which included the present-day provinces of Hupeh, Hunan, Kwangtung, and the Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region. Today the city still is important administratively, serving as the seat of the Hupeh Provincial Government.

Wu-ch'ang has traditionally been the cultural and educational center of the metropolis. Since 1949 the city's educational facilities have expanded greatly, and it has become one of the leading centers of higher learning in China. A large educational complex east of the old city houses the campuses of Wu-han University, Hupeh Agricultural College, the Central Institute of Nationalities, and the Wu-han Physical Education Institute (probably the home of the world-famous Wu-han Acrobatic Troupe). Several smaller scientific and industrial institutes are also located in the complex.

The old part of the city is built around She Shan, (Serpent Hill), a long, low ridge that physically divides the urban area into two roughly equal parts. North of She Shan the old city has preserved much traditional Chinese character and is given over

largely to commerce, government, and residences, with industry generally confined to the riverfront. South of She Shan, however, this traditional character has been diluted by the establishment of several large machinery factories, an important shipyard, a number of military facilities, and several government buildings.

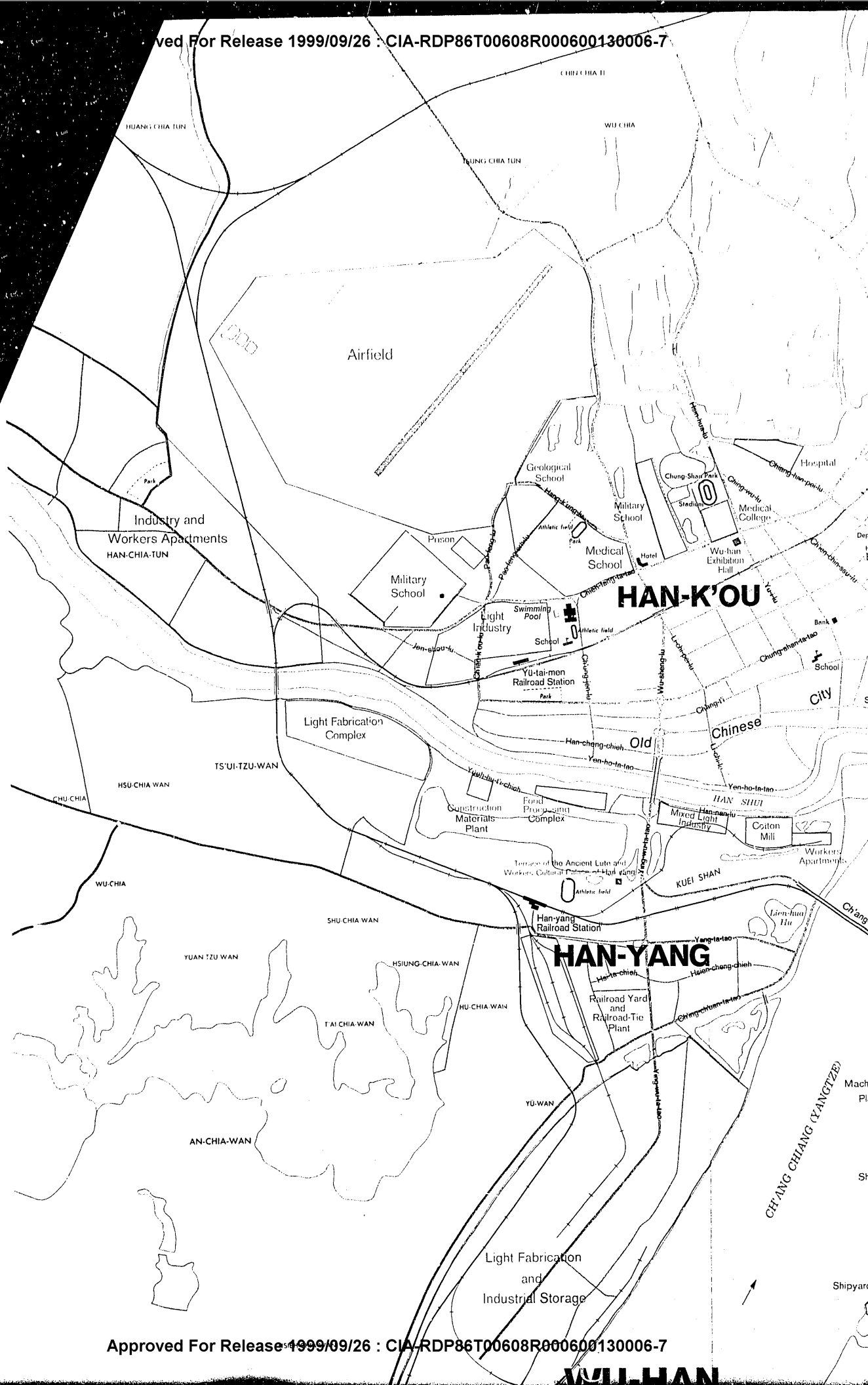
More important than the growth of factories and workshops within Wu-ch'ang proper has been the industrial expansion north and south of the old city along the right bank of the Yangtze. Railroad repair shops, chemical works, and machine tool plants have been added, joining the long-established industries producing cotton and silk textiles, paper, and food.

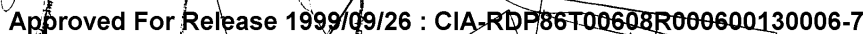
Attractions

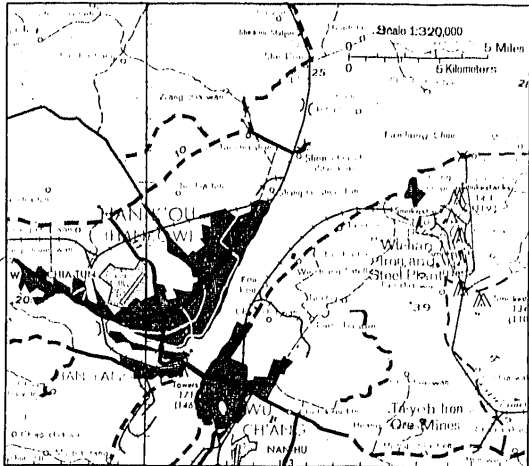
The Wu-han Iron and Steel Complex frequently is included on the itinerary of visiting delegations. Located about 10 miles northeast of Wu-ch'ang near the town of Ch'ing-shan, it has made Wu-han the principal industrial center in the middle Yangtze region and one of the five or six most important industrial cities in China. The heart of the complex is a 3-million-metric-ton integrated iron and steel plant. Iron ore, limestone, coal and other raw materials are all supplied from local sources.

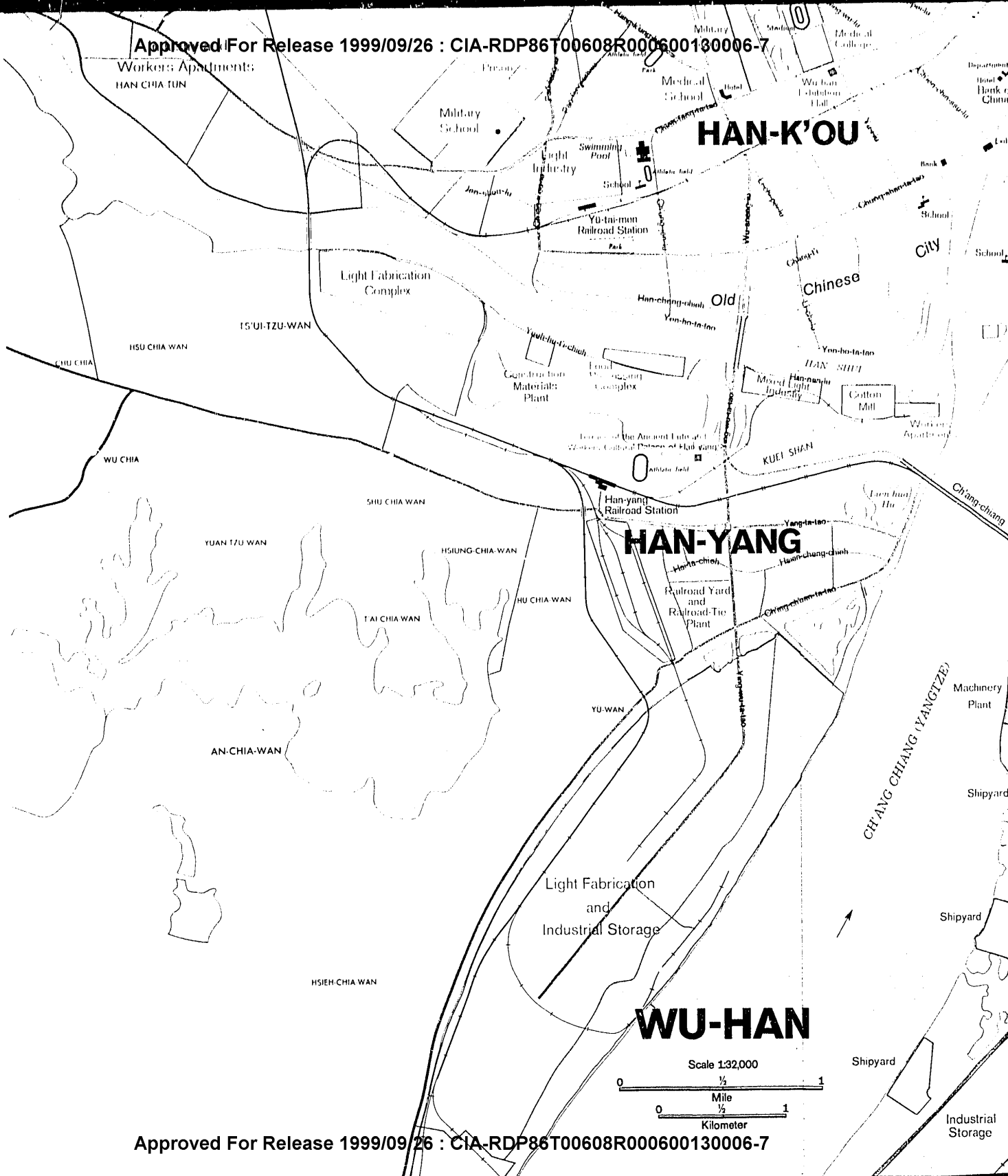
Work began on the plant in late 1955, and at one point there were as many as 50,000 laborers involved in its construction, including more than 100 Soviet specialists. The first blast furnace came into production in September 1958; there are now four with a fifth one planned (even though the steel complex is often reported as not producing at capacity). The complex, including associated machinery, chemical, fertilizer, and construction materials plants, occupies an area of approximately 40 square miles and has more than 60,000 workers. Visitors to the complex are most often taken to Ch'ing-shan via river boat; the cruise takes approximately 40 minutes.

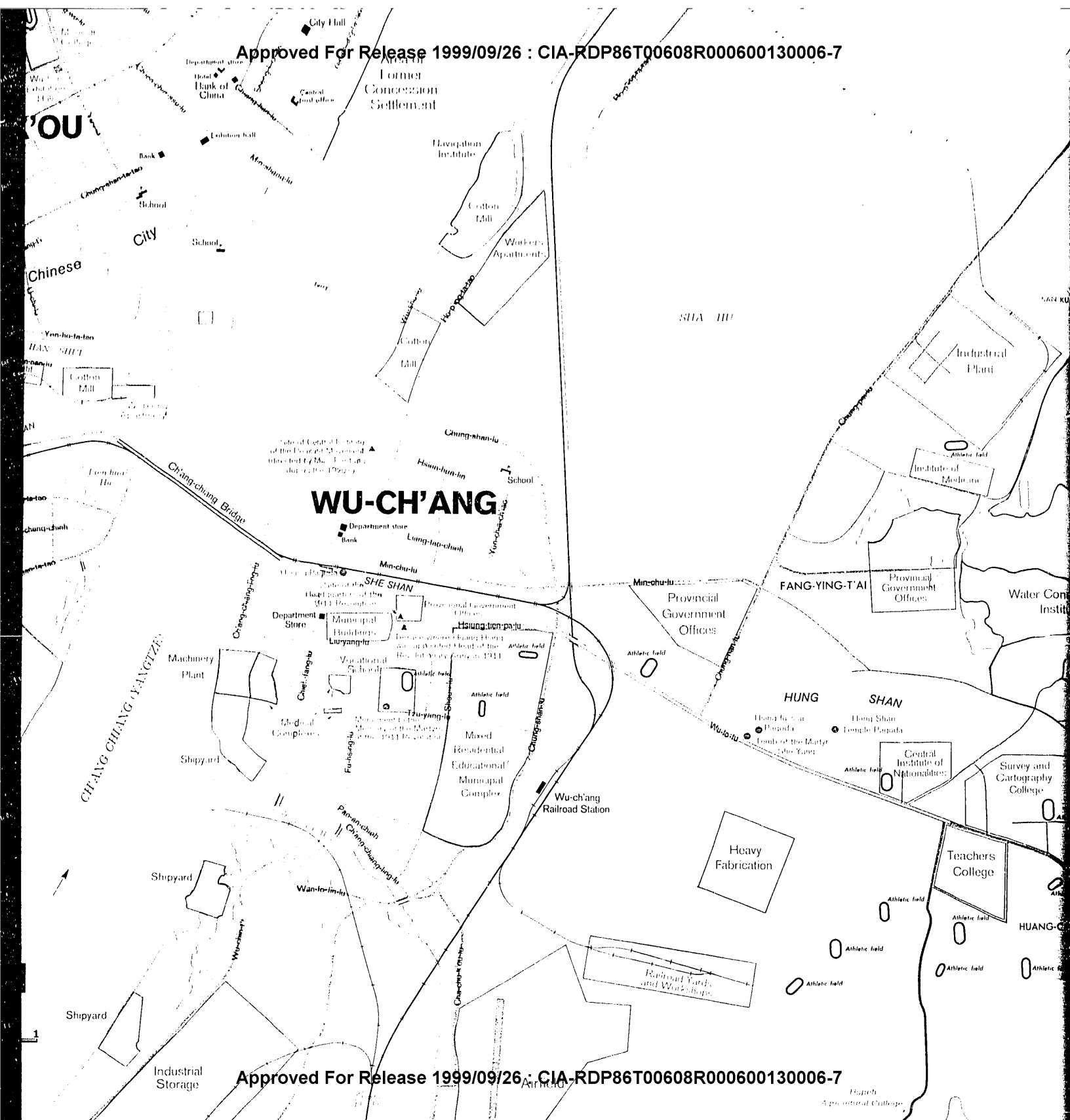
Some visitors have also been given tours of the Ta-yeh Iron Ore Mines, a series of rail-served, open pit mines located approximately 40 miles southeast of the iron and steel complex. First opened in the 1890s to supply the iron works at Han-yang, these open pit operations provide almost all of the iron ore (and limestone) used at the Ch'ing-shan complex. With a skilled labor force using modern mining equipment and living in good accommodations, Ta-yeh is a model Chinese mining operation.











Area of Former Concentration Settlement

-CH'ANG

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